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BALISTIC MISSILE PROLIFERATION

Q1 - What actions have been taken or are contemplated to secure Chinese cooperation to end the proliferation of ballistic missiles in the Middle East and other Third World regions?

A1. As you know, the U.S. and its six Economic Summit partners have agreed to the export control policy guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). We share a common concern about the proliferation of ballistic missiles, especially to volatile regions such as the Middle East and South Asia. In the aftermath of the unprecedented Chinese sale of CSS-2 missiles to Saudi Arabia, we have discussed this issue with the Chinese in an effort to develop a mutual understanding of the dangerous and destabilizing effects of missile proliferation. It was a prominent topic of discussion during Secretary Shultz's visit to Beijing in July, my own talks with Chinese leaders last month, and during Secretary Carlucci's visit earlier this month. After his talks with Chinese leaders, Secretary Carlucci stated that he was fully satisfied with their statements that China takes a responsible and prudent approach on military sales.

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Q2 Why was China not invited to participate in the MTCR?

A2. China, together with all other nations, was invited to join in April 1987 when the Regime was announced. As a first step, discussions were held among seven nations which were long-standing partners and major technology suppliers. Even so, the discussions that led to the multilateral MTCR were long and complicated. [We have ~~offered to~~ briefed Chinese officials [in detail] on the goals and objectives of the regime, and we will continue to keep them informed of its evolution and expansion.] ✓

Q3. What is the Soviet Union doing about missile proliferation?

A3. The Soviets have provided shorter range ballistic missiles to a number of countries, including Iraq and Syria. The INF Treaty obligates the Soviet Union to eliminate all ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 km and 5,500 km over a three-year period, and not to possess such weapons thereafter. As a practical matter, therefore, since the USSR must eliminate and not possess missiles in this range, it will not be able to transfer them to others. We believe that Moscow largely shares our concern about the destabilizing effect of ballistic missile in the Third World. On that basis, we have also engaged the Soviets in serious discussions aimed at securing their active cooperation in international efforts to curb the spread of these weapons, possibly through association with the MTCR.

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